

Ricchiuti's volunteerism and her philanthropic spirit, the time and produce that she has donated has benefited multiple organizations in the Fresno area including numerous schools within the Clovis Unified School District, the Fresno Art Museum, Fresno Metropolitan Museum, Junior League of Fresno and Assistance League of Fresno. She has made donations to various California State University organizations and the not-for-profit hospitals in the region.

For Mrs. Ricchiuti's commitment and dedication to her community, she has been recognized as the "California State University, Fresno Alumni of the Year" from the School of Arts and Humanities, the "Arthur Safstrom Award for Outstanding Service to Fresno State." She has also been named the California State University, Fresno Alumni Association "Top Dog," the Association of Fundraising Professionals "Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year," and the Foundation for Clovis Schools "Guardian of the Year."

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Vinci Ricchiuti upon being named a "2009 Common Threads Honoree" by California State University, Fresno. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mrs. Ricchiuti many years of continued success.

HONORING DOCTOR CHARLES  
JOHNSON

**HON. JIM McDERMOTT**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 21, 2009*

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, on the occasion of the honoring of his lifetime achievement by one of Seattle's historic organizations and keeper of the arts, the Rainier Club, the people of the State of Washington hold up as a national inspiration the work of one of the world's most distinguished authors, Seattle's own Dr. Charles Johnson.

Dr. Johnson made the journey to Seattle from Long Island in 1976 to teach at the University of Washington. He noted in *Smithsonian Magazine* in 2008 that Seattle is "an ideal environment for nurturing innovation, individualism and the creative spirit." It is in this setting that Dr. Johnson has made a uniquely rich array of contributions to the arts and letters, and became one of his generation's most distinguished African American authors.

While his works are too numerous to list, Madam Speaker, Dr. Johnson counts among his literary gems four novels, *Faith and the Good Thing*, *Oxherding Tale*, *Middle Passage*, and *Dreamer*; as well as short stories, screenplays, aesthetics, comic art, and *King: The Photobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* His awards and honors are as abundant as they are approbative.

Dr. Johnson noted in Seattle's *Post-Intelligencer* on April 27, 2007 that American society is threatened by a "diminished literary culture," the cure for which is "the experience of complex, well-wrought, visionary books that challenge our assumptions, our intellectual laziness, and transform as well as deepen our perceptions of the world and ourselves." While he probably intended otherwise, this describes Dr. Johnson's own pivotal role in our literary ethos, as his works consistently have challenged readers' assumptions and intellectual

laziness while transforming and deepening our world view and our self-knowledge.

Dr. Johnson's influence is international, but it is our honor that his presence is local to Washington State's 7th Congressional District.

IN HONOR OF THE PERFORMING  
ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY  
(PAWS)

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 21, 2009*

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the 25th anniversary of the founding of The Performing Animal Welfare Society, PAWS, which continues to valiantly lead efforts to protect all animals and to ensure proper humane sanctuary for wildlife who have experienced the inhumanity of the exotic and performing animal trades.

In 1984, Pat Derby and Ed Stewart founded PAWS, sharing their commitment to develop a pristine sanctuary for abused, neglected and retired wildlife. Throughout the last 25 years, I am proud to have worked with PAWS to ensure improved, humane standards for captive wildlife. An early success for PAWS and animal rights activists was celebrated in 1985 with the passing of California Assembly Bill 1620 which introduced humane standards for the care and handling of wildlife. Following that initial success, more support was garnered which led the California Assembly to pass the Elephant Bill in 1995. This historic statute mandated that elephants be provided minimum adequate space to move freely and prohibited the use of chains for confinement.

Building on previous accomplishments, PAWS forged a bipartisan partnership with Congress in 1997 to pass the Asian Elephant Conservation Act. In another watershed moment for animal protection advocates, this important legislation provided financial assistance for projects intended to protect Asian elephants and blocked funding for captive breeding programs. As a co-sponsor of the original Act, and having twice voted to fully fund the Asian Elephant Conservation Reauthorization Acts of 2001 and 2007, I understand the importance and deeply appreciate the beneficence of PAWS. In addition to protecting elephants, PAWS has successfully implemented solutions to rescue and relocate over 35 tigers and other animals from breeding facilities.

Through The Performing Animal Welfare Society's extraordinary accomplishments, which now includes over 2,400 acres of natural protected sanctuaries, countless captive animals have been rescued from hazardous and inhumane conditions and have been provided with healthy and sustainable environments in which to live quality lives. Without their steadfast support and dedication for the humane treatment of wildlife, our nation's efforts to protect these animals would be drastically impaired.

Madam Speaker, it is with the upmost respect and gratitude that I rise to honor the 25th anniversary of PAWS and especially to pay tribute to Pat Derby and Ed Stewart.

TRIBUTE TO THE BOOKER T.  
WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL  
CLASS OF 1949

**HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 21, 2009*

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to recognize and extend my congratulations to the Booker T. Washington High School Class of 1949 as they prepare to celebrate their 60th class reunion. Booker T. Washington High School is located in Overtown, Miami, Florida, which is in my congressional District.

Founded in 1926 for African-American students residing from West Palm Beach to Key West, Booker T. Washington High School has served as a stalwart in the Miami-Dade County community since its inception. By 1949, Booker T. Washington High School was one of three African-American high schools in Miami-Dade County and since then has become a vital center for cultural activities in Overtown.

The Class of 1949 was the first high school alumni group in South Florida to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a holiday. Additionally, the Class of 1949 has been the sole alumni group in the country to file and successfully conclude a Civil Rights Action, specifically a public accommodation lawsuit against a commercial establishment. Moreover, many "49ers" have engaged in charitable endeavors including granting educational scholarships, annual contributions and support to the United Negro College Fund, the Black Archives and the Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation.

Noteworthy achievements by the "49ers" include: the first African-American elected to public office in Miami-Dade County as a County Commissioner, the first African-American to serve as chairman of a board in Miami-Dade County the Fair Housing and Employment Commission and the first African-American to serve as a head coach at a fully integrated public high school in Miami-Dade County.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to commemorate Booker T. Washington High School for its remarkable role in fostering education among African-Americans and implore its alumni to ensure that future generations have educational access to foster the skills to face complex challenges. I once again extend my congratulations to the members of the Booker T. Washington High School Class of 1949 as they prepare to celebrate their 60th class reunion.

CONGRATULATING THE ROCH-  
ESTER HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BAS-  
KETBALL TEAM

**HON. JOE DONNELLY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 21, 2009*

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana. Madam Speaker, today I rise to extend my congratulations to the Rochester High School Boys Basketball Team. The Zebras succeeded in placing second in the IHSAA 3-A State Tournament on March 28, 2009 at Conseco Field House in Indianapolis. After making it to the championship